

# Low level pioneer

In July we covered low level access equipment, focusing on the latest new products with a little bit of history of how the market developed thrown in. However sadly we did not have room to mention one of the very earliest pioneers in the sector Pierino Bravi - Mr. Bravi to many of his customers.

Pierino Bravi's story is not an unfamiliar one in the access industry, in that he started out in 1978 at the age of 22, in what seems like an entirely different field. His original business involved the installation of thermal and acoustic panels in commercial buildings such as offices, warehouses and shops. One of the most challenging aspects involved working at height, including the installation of false ceilings and panelling. Finding that there was strong demand he formed a company - Braviisol in 1980 which celebrates its 40th anniversary next year.

As he required more staff, he realised how carrying equipment and materials to the work area - particularly scaffolding or ladders - and setting it up, wasted a great deal of time and effort, often representing half of the allocated time for the job. Concerned with the rate of productivity - especially with Italy's high employment costs - along with the safety of his employees when working at height, he began to design and develop safer more efficient solutions for working at height.

Pierino Bravi with a picture of his first platform the B.P.3 modular tower



When asked why he said: "If the market did not offer suitable equipment, the solution was simple. We needed to invent new ones!". His first platform in 1986 was the B.P.3, a push around modular tower arrangement with a maximum working height of thirteen metres and a small powered end deck. This was followed by a nine metre model the Lui A in 1989. However these early machines were not really commercially attractive, he is quoted as saying "To be honest the Americans made much better lifts than my early models". However he learnt how to build better machines and in 1995 he introduced the Lui Mini - the predecessor to the Leonardo HD - with a five metre working height. This changed everything and sales took off. Since then the basic principals of that idea have not changed.

Bravi Platforms has both its manufacturing plant and offices in Castelfidardo, in the Marche region Italy's east coast. It has a covered space of 7,000 square metres, with a further 2,000 square metres due to be completed by the end of this year. The plant houses an advanced automatic assembly line



Bravi Leonardo HD with plasterboard handling attachment

and workshop, as well as a safety and reliability testing area. All steel components are fabricated and welded inhouse.

Over the past three years Bravi has invested more than €3 million on the development of new products and improving the efficiency of the manufacturing process, with a view to increase production capabilities, while maintaining flexibility. This has also allowed prices of finished products to remain competitive without sacrificing quality or specifications. Bravi is set to invest a further €5 million in expanding production capacity over the next five years.

"The time we have spent on constantly researching and developing our products, selecting high quality components and talking to customers to understand their needs has brought us where we are today," says Bravi. "Our products are designed first and foremost with the end user in mind and hence developed to satisfy the rental market. Rental companies also tell us that they average a 47 percent return on their investment in Bravi platforms, and they have an excellent residual value."

"We have seen a very positive market over the last few years. We feel that the market has peaked and are aware that the next few years will probably see a slowdown, but we are sure that the trend towards increased safety standards will keep our numbers well within our objectives."



Lui 460

## Bravi notable dates

- 1978** Bravi Pierino begins his career in the construction sector with a focus on fit outs, renovations and installations.
- 1980** Bravi registers his business as Bravisol.
- 1986** The first self-propelled platform - the Model B.P.3
- 1989** The Lui is unveiled
- 1995** The first hydraulic lift models, the Lui S.I. with a working height of nine metres and the five metre Lui Mini are launched.
- 1998** Lui 400 with six metre working height
- 2009** The Caddy- the first product in the stock picking line
- 2010** Bravi Lite - a 398kg version of the Lui Mini. The Lui 400 becomes the Lui 460
- The 4.9 metre Leonardo HD is launched with an upgraded all-steel chassis and canopy
- 2011** A new version of the Lui Mini - Leonardo is designed which is simpler and less expensive
- The Sol Gyps accessory for the Leonardo for the installation of plasterboard/drywall panels
- The Spin-Go - a push-around stock picker
- 2014** The Sprint order picker is restyled with sleeker design and improved features.
- 2015** The Leonardo HD is upgraded with a new ultra-compact joystick
- 2019** The Sprint TL made to measure tyre picker is unveiled



Leonardo



Lui 900



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